Mat-Su Monitor
Matanuska-Susitna College
October 2008

MSC Candidate Forum: Thinking State-Wide and Acting Locally

By Kellie Coulson Davis

On October 16, Mat-Su College hosted a Candidate Forum and invited all of the candidates running for the five Valley State House seats and the Wasilla Senate seat. With just 19 days until the election, we had a great showing. The incumbent candidates who came for the House seats (all Republican) were John Harris, Carl Gatto, Wes Keller, Bill Stoltze and Mark Neuman Their respective opponents (all Democrat) were Nancy Lethcoe, David Cheezem, Rose Smith and Beverly Serrano. Neuman's opponent Lew Dischner, was unable to attend. State Senate Seat G candidates Erick Cordero (Democrat) and Linda Menard (Republican) were also in attendance.

The candidates were asked questions written down by Mat-Su students and drawn out of a basket. Rose Smith was the most outspoken on the Pebble Mine, explaining that she felt that any time there was mining there is the risk of pollution, and that with Pebble, the potential to destroy the world's largest salmon fishery was not worth the risk. Her opponent, incumbent Wes Keller, said that he favored opening the Pebble Mine, and he stated that it is in the state constitution that Alaska use its natural resources.

On an issue where both candidates agreed was on the No Child Left Behind Act. Bill Stoltze emphasized that he did not like the "one size fits all" approach to the act given the diverse nature of our state. He stated that while it helped with procedures, the best educational policies are formed by local school boards. Beverly Serrano agreed, and the audience laughed and a small applause was heard when she said, "No Child Left Behind should be left behind."

Mark Neuman spoke at length on workforce development and dealing with North Slope natural gas. He argued for taking "wet gasses" out of the natural gas that we have on the North Slope, which is currently slated for transportation to Canada. He told us that the wet gas up in Prudhoe Bay could be broken down and used as natural gas, propane and butane, The propane, he said, can be sent down the Yukon to energy starved villages, and the butane can be used locally to make plastic feed stock He suggested building such a plant at Point McKenzie, which would add to the Valley's property tax base and provide jobs.

Linda Menard said that she favored AGIA—a plan to ship natural gas to Canada rather than to a LNG port in Alaska, but she appeared to not answer the question when asked about legislating "open and transparent government." She appeared to ignore the question and instead spoke of supporting term limits. Challenger Erick Cordero answered the question and explained that there should always be open and transparent government when it came to creating and passing bills unless there was an issue with public or personal safety. Erick Cordero countered her discussion on term limits by explaining that if the politicians themselves are not able to gain experience, then they rely upon non-elected staffers in Juneau who then direct the sessions.

Carl Gatto was asked how to keep kids from dropping out of school. Gatto feels that kids who drop out of high school have a higher rate of breaking the law and going into the legal system. It's cheaper for the state, he argued, to keep them in school. Gatto said that he wants to get to at risk students as high school freshmen and get them into technical training. His opponent, David Cheezem, shot back that working with kids should begin in preschool with programs like Head Start, which is designed to give children with economic or learning setbacks the chance to be more ready to enter school. Cheezem said that the Head Start program is proven to promote student success and higher high school graduation rates. He then accused Gatto for having voted to cut funding for Head Start. While both candidates seemed passionate about this topic, and Gatto has shown support for his ideas on vocational education, Cheezem argued for getting to the kids early so they may choose whether to go to voc-ed, not merely end up in voc-ed..

When asked what the candidates thought of Governor Palin being nominated as the Republican Vice Presidential Candidate, there was a moment of uncomfortable silence to which Beverly Serrano answered a safe statement that it was great for Alaska and that she knew that Sarah Palin would do her best.

Incumbent John Harris, who has lead the way and authored the state's Renewable Energy Fund, reemphasized the importance of what he is trying to accomplish with it so that Alaska won't have to be dependent on fossil fuels. His challenger, Nancy Lethcoe, expressed her concerns facing the population at large, such as health care bills that never made it out of committees, and concerns that the best bills get watered down before they get voted on, causing a few nods and murmurs of agreement from those in attendance.

With the exception of John Harris, each of the incumbents spoke of how much they liked working with one another, naming them and smiling and nodding to one another. Such acknowledgement outwardly suggested "an old boy's network."

Candidate's

This prompted their challengers to say that they could get along with those on both sides of the aisle, and that they also wanted the chance. The most spirited speaker on this topic was Beverly Serrano, who happened to be last to give a final statement. She sarcastically said that "she hated to break up their fraternity," and said that she has friends in all parties and that she didn't belong to a fraternity but hoped that she'd be sent to Juneau to work with everyone. By: Jane Deuster

New Professor of Education

Marc Robinson

Dr. Marc Robinson
Assistant Professor of Education
UAA, Mat-Su Campus

Dr. Marc Robinson made a trip to Alaska in 1978 from Chicago to perform music professionally. Although his intent in the beginning may not have been to stay here permanently, he decided to make Alaska his home. He and his wife (whose profession is a psychologist) have a daughter who took after her father in that she is a professional Jazz singer.

Dr. Robinson received his Doctorate from the University of Oregon, his Masters from UAA and his Bachelors from St. Xavier University of Chicago. Twice he has received prestigious nominations; one for BP Teacher of the year and one for National Outstanding Principal.

Dr. Robinson has a plethora of teaching experience. He taught 2 years in Special Education, 2 years of High School, 1 year in Middle School, 10 years in Elementary School and 10 years as a principal. He is a specialist in reading and educational leadership and one of his missions is to help elementary teachers "do it right."

Outside of work, some of his interests include membership in NAESP and he keeps his principal certificates active. His passion for music has not been neglected and he finds some off duty time to enjoy casual performing. In addition to singing, his instruments of choice are piano, organ, and synthesizers and maybe if you pay him a visit he'll clue you in on when and where his next "gig" will be.

The classes he is currently or will be teaching are Cultural Foundations, Foundations of Teaching and Learning, Educational Technology and Creative Arts. In addition, he supervises all of the Mat Su student teachers.

Dr. Robinson is located in the KJB Building in room 122C. His email address is mrobinson@matsu.alaska.edu and his phone number is 746-9328. Call or email him for an appointment if you want to meet and talk with him though since oftentimes he is in the field observing at schools. Welcome to UAA Mat-Su

New Professor of English

Debi Fox

By: Jane Deuster

Dr. Debi Fox
Assistant Professor of English

Dr. Fox is an Assistant Professor of English at UAA Mat-Su. She moved back to Alaska after spending 6 years of military time in Germany and Australia with her husband. Dr. Fox has traveled extensively within the United States and abroad.

She attended the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, Utah State University at Logan, Utah, the University of Maryland, Munich Campus and her most current degree was received from Macquarie University in Sydney. Dr. Fox has been teaching since 1991 at various schools besides UAA Mat-Su, including Wayland Baptist University and the University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

She entered into the English teaching profession while pursuing her studies in Technical Writing. Dr. Fox currently teaches Technical Writing, Persuasive Writing, Introduction to Literature and Introduction to College Writing, so no doubt, many of you will get the opportunity to meet her.

Outside her busy work schedule Dr. Fox finds the time to enjoy her family, gardening, her animals, and like any true Alaskan, spending as much time outdoors as possible.

Make a point to meet Dr. Fox; you can reach her at dfox@matsu.alaska.edu and her Monday office hours are from 1:00-2:00

New Professor of Business

Holly Bell

By: Jane Deuster

Professor Holly A. Bell
Assistant Professor of Business

Professor Bell moved to Alaska in May, 2008 from Rapid City, South Dakota. She and her husband took this opportunity to drive up the Alaska Highway to enjoy the scenery and spend some quality time together since he had been away for three months of pilot training for FedEx. Holly was raised in Beaver Dam, Wisconsin and spent some time in Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee and South Dakota as well. She and her husband have four children, two in Wisconsin, one in North Carolina and one attending UAA. They also have two cats.

Holly Bell was a nontraditional student in that she took several classes at many different universities in order to get all the required classes for her degree. These colleges included the University of Wisconsin Superior, Christian Brothers University, the University of Mississippi and the University of Memphis where she received her undergraduate degree in Economics and International Studies and a minor in Political Science. She received her MBA from the University of South Dakota.

Professor Bell's work history has includes a diverse field of experiences. She has been licensed for administering and fitting hearing aids for hearing disable individuals. She has also been active in the business arena where she worked at FedEx Corporate World Headquarters in Memphis, TN as their Manager of Performance and Technical Support. She taught at Western Dakota Technical Institute, the National American University, Black Hills State University, South Dakota School of Mines and Technology and Oglala Lakota College (a tribal college of the Lakota Sioux).

Professor Bell is involved in the Rotaract Club which is a Rotary-sponsored club for professionals and young men and women from ages 18 to 30. Holly emphasizes the benefits of becoming a member in this club

as an opportunity for college students to meet business people working in the community and thus enabling them to provide leadership experiences for their resumes.

Professor Bell is currently teaching Introduction to Business, Principles of Accounting I, and Statistics for Business and Economics and also Finance. Take a moment to meet with Professor Bell to discuss business education opportunities, get business advice and find out more about the Rotaract Club here in the Valley. Her email address is HBell@matsu.alaska.edu and her phone number is 746-9316. Her office hours are Monday and Thursday from 9-11am. Welcome aboard Professor Bell!

New Assistant Director

Kristin Ownes

By: Jane Deuster
Assistant Director
Academic Affairs

Dr. Owens moved to Alaska from the Washington, D.C area. She and her husband enjoyed a scenic 2 week adventure during their cross-country drive to Bellingham, Washington, and then enjoyed another scenic tour via the ferry to Alaska. Her husband is a Lieutenant Colonel in the Air Force and upon receiving his orders to relocate to Alaska, he asked her to marry him. Dr. Owens doesn't shy away from adventure, so she quit her job, sold her home and replaced her convertible with sensible things like fleece and the rest is history. She and her husband live in Chugiak.

Dr. Owens has lived in many different geographic location, growing up in Buffalo, NY, and Germany during college; the time period the Berlin Wall was coming down. She lived in Pennsylvania and Maryland as well.

Dr. Kristin Owens attended State University of NY at Cortland where she received her B.A in German. Her M.S in Student Personnel Administration was received from Buffalo State. While living in Pennsylvania for 6 years, she received her Ph.D in Higher Education from Penn State, and finally she was an Assistant Dean at the University of Maryland College Park.

Dr. Owens has been teaching in one capacity of another for nearly 19 years. One of her favorite classes to teach is Introduction to College (GUID 150 at UAA Mat-Su). She is currently teaching a graduate course in counseling for UAA.

Through hard work and tenaciousness, Dr. Owens is glad that she persevered through all the schooling she has received and says it has been well worth it. She's someone you can talk to when you find yourself struggling through education issues ranging from finances to time management.

Outside of education interests she enjoys football and is a Green Bay Packers and Buffalo Bills fan. She gets outdoors and does some cross-country skiing, geo-caching (and if you don't know that that is, it would be a good reason to stop by and pay her a visit), fishing, and like all of us, traveling to warm and sunny places. In addition, Dr. Owens has taught dance ranging from tap dance for 2 year olds to ballroom dancing for retirees.

Dr. Owens is very close to her family and a story she likes to share involves her father. He started off sweeping floors in a furniture factory as part of a vocational-education program at his high school. The factory made high-quality handmade furniture and after he graduated they hired him full time. For the past 40 years, he has been their master craftsman and all of us have actually seen his work. Many of his hand made pieces are in the White House including the President's thirty foot conference table you see on CNN. Dr. Owens' case in point, education is for everyone and you should make the most of the opportunities presented to you.

Dr. Kristin Owens is a strong advocate for education and believes it is vitally important to share that with others; she says that education is something on one can ever take away from you.

Stop by her office and meet Dr. Owens; her email is kowens@matsu.alaska.edu and her office is located in 132 JKB.

Introducing IT Professor

Harry Banks

By: Jane Deuster

Dr. Harry Banks
Instructor of Information Technology

Dr. Banks has been affiliated with UAA since 1990 and in September 2008 he began teaching here on a full time basis. Dr. Banks left Pennsylvania in 1981 and moved to Alaska where he spent his first season here as a commercial fisherman in Dillingham. He then traveled all around the state of Alaska getting to know the terrain, its cultures and people. Traveling is something Dr. Banks is very familiar with as he attended school for a year abroad and traveled through Europe.

Dr. Banks' education includes Columbia Union College in Washington D.C, obtaining his Masters at Andrews University in Michigan and his Doctorate in Pittsburg Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania. Specializing in the fast paced & changing field technology requires numerous updates and Technology Certifications which Dr. Banks stays well apprised of.

Teaching has been his profession since 1988 including 2 years at Central Texas College (located on Fort Rich in Anchorage). This semester he is coordinating the CST Program and TECT-CNT Program and teaching technical information classes.

Dr. Banks' work history includes 17 years employment with the Matanuska Susitna Borough as an Information Technologist while teaching part time. His expertise in computers earned him technical positions with the Borough including a programmer for the AS400, computer repairs, network and database administrator.

Dr. Banks has two daughters and one grandson. Both of his daughters have followed in their father's footsteps and earned their Master's degrees. He and his wife live in Willow where they enjoy life with their 20 sled dogs, 2 cats, and 2 horses and a miniature pony. In addition, Dr. Banks enjoys sailing, free lance photography and Video / DVD production and technology.

A person who loves and excels at what they do is an individual you will want to learn from and Dr. Harry Banks perfectly fits that description. Visit Dr. Banks in his office located in KJB 122C and say hello, you'll leave feeling inspired. His email address is hbanks@matsu.edu and his telephone number is 745-9783.

VPA's Latest Show

By: Valley Performing Arts

Is there really such a thing as the perfect murder? In Valley Performing Arts' production of the Alfred Hitchcock classic, "Dial M for Murder," there might just be.

Former tennis player Tony Wendice has spent the last year fine-tuning his plan to kill wealthy wife Margot. With money stashed and an accomplice hired to do the dirty work, it looks like Tony might just pull it off. But as Mark Halliday (a crime writer with whom Margot once had an affair) points out, in real life things don't always go according to plan.

Putting together a show that's already been such an enormous success on the silver screen can be a challenge, but it's one that director John Harris was prepared to take on. "It is difficult to do it well; it is even more difficult to provide your own vision for a production to which an audience might bring its own expectations. Meeting the expectations of an informed audience while still providing a new and exciting experience has been my goal with this play."

One thing that's proven key to the strength of the production is the chemistry among the cast and crew. Rehearsals carry an air of upbeat focus, with offstage smiles and laughter offering balance to the tension onstage. "They work so well together," said one visitor. "You can tell they're having fun."

It's a combination that vitalizes Frederick Knott's play. There's a palpable energy to be felt in the theater, and observers can't help but be drawn in by the play's twists and turns. Even the crew isn't immune: "On her first night at rehearsal," said Harris, "my new stage manager got so distracted by the action and intrigue of the play that she forgot to watch the script."

Whether or not Tony Wendice can serve up the perfect murder remains to be seen, but one thing is certain: Dial M offers a perfect night out that is sure to keep the audience at the edge of their seats.

Dial M for Murder chills and thrills audiences October 17 - November 9th at Valley Performing Arts. Tickets can be purchased online at valleyperformingarts.org or by calling VPA's box office at 373-0195.

For more information, or to schedule an interview with the show's director and cast, please contact Summer Horton at 715-8949 or summer23@mtaonline.net.

Mat-Su Scholarship Winners

By: Suzanne Bach
Fine Arts Coordinator

Matanuska-Susitna College announces the winners of the High School Art Portfolio Competition, as selected by juror John Barton, adjunct art professor at MSC and former professor at UAF. This is the twelfth annual competition and is offered statewide for high school seniors every spring. The first place Scholarship winner is Leslie Thomas, from Wasilla High School. Ms. Thomas will receive 24 credit hours for the year of 2008-2009 at the college. Second place is, Trenton Levra, also from Wasilla High School, who will receive 6 credit hours for the fall of 2008. The first place winner's name will be engraved on a permanent brass plaque display in the Art Department at Matanuska-Susitna College. Both will receive Certificates of Merit.

Leslie Thomas, whose focus is in drawing, has artwork that is overall very consistently finished and resolved, according to the juror. "A strong sense of design, composition, and technical ability was evident in each piece" says Barton about her work. Describing Mr. Levra's work the juror said that his "ability to conceptualize and integrate complex elements of design using found object combinations holds great promise." As is often the case between the finalist of this competition it was very close and "proved challenging" Barton said.

Matanuska-Susitna College Art Department congratulates the winners, and thanks all of the participants in this year's high school portfolio competition. For information on next year's competition please contact Suzanne Bach, Fine Arts Coordinator, at 907-745-9755; pfeb@matsu.alaska.edu.

Leslie Thomas

Trenton Levra

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Pandemonium-a place for everyone

By: Jane Deuster

A new wave of excitement hit Wasilla in June this year and it has become the talk of the town. The hot topic revolves around an upbeat and modern combination coffee house/ book store called Pandemonium, located on the Palmer Wasilla Highway Extension just in front of Home Depot, an ideal location out of traffic but close to town. Wasilla has waited a long time for a destination place suitable for everyone. It's a place where students can "plug in" with wireless internet access, grab a cup of java, a bite to eat and cozy up to the warmth of a fireplace while having access to study aids and curriculum. It's a place for families to take their kids, grab a bite to eat & browse through books. It's a place to meet with your friends over a cup of coffee or lunch. It's a meeting place for clubs & organizations. It's a destination to fulfill many needs and it's amazing how the atmosphere lends itself to both a study friendly atmosphere in addition to a place buzzing with excitement. The owners and founders, Leonard & Shannon Cullip and Rex Weltz have made it their mission to create a place for everyone to enjoy and I think you'll agree when you discover for yourself all Pandemonium has to offer.

To begin with, when you first walk into the café/bookstore, you can't help but pause and ask yourself, "am I still in Wasilla?" It is apparent that Pandemonium has succeeded in bringing the fashion and style of Wasilla into the 21st Century, finally! You'll immediately be wrapped in warmth by the cozy 3sided fireplace surrounded by over-sized chocolate colored leather seating. The handmade artwork is amazing (and most of it is for sale).The tables are comfortable and cozy and set up in a well lit atmosphere with a view of the true mountainous vistas Alaska is famous for. On a dark evening, the soft lights they have installed radiate the café with a warm glow. Even the bathrooms are artfully decorated and lit with warmth.

Now, about the coffee; superb is the only description worthy. Pandemonium uses award winning organic coffee prepared by skilled and friendly baristas. The unique designs they create with each cup of coffee is truly a thing to behold. If you order mocha, prepare you taste buds, because they flavor it with homemade chocolate sauce! Of course coffee isn't the only beverage they serve, they also concoct Chai, Frappuccinos, Italian Sodas, Floats, Milk Shakes (made with Alaska Supreme Ice Cream), Red Bull (for you hard core students staying up late studying), and smoothies. Speaking of late night studying, Pandemonium's hours are Monday-Thursday 6:30am to 10:00pm, Friday & Saturday 6:30 am to 11:00pm and Sundays 8:00am to 8:00pm. Those hours accommodate both the early risers and the night owls, how's that for taking everyone's needs into account?

Food for thought: You can enjoy delicious desserts and they are not the average sort you will find just anywhere! Pies, Brownie Sundaes, Ice Cream, Fresh Fruit Parfaits, Biscotti and Fresh baked Muffins and Bread. The only dilemma you'll have is in choosing which one and then being able to finish it (the huge serving may necessitate a take-home carton.) Recently, Pandemonium has expanded their menu and they now serve Lunch/ Dinner between 11:00am to 7:30 pm. The food menu includes delicious soups, scrumptious salads and a variety of sandwiches. Drop by the store and grab a menu to take home for those times you want to call in an order.

One last feature of the café side of the store is the Entertainment they provide: stop by on a Saturday night 8am-11pm and you can enjoy a variety of local musicians. It's a great way to spend a Saturday night and you'll find that once you get there, you won't want to leave. You can check out each week's entertainer by going to the Pandemonium website at pandemonium.com

Now about the book store: Books are the main theme, of course, but there's so much more. They stock 20,000 titles and more each day soif you can't find the book you are looking for at Pandemonium, they will order it on the spot and will usually have it for you in a week to 10 days, now that's service.

Pandemonium has a complete home school curriculum and owner Shannon Cullip is the guru of this specialized curriculum. They display over 300 publishers on the shelves and if she doesn't have it in stock, she'll get it. In addition, Pandemonium has published their own catalogue you can place orders through, it's a volume of gifts, books and learning tools and you can pick one up to take home with you and browse through it at your leisure. Also, speaking of gifts, you will have to check out the vast array of unique gifts and school supplies available. It may turn out to be your one-stop shopping place for gifts.

You can sign up to join the book club which meets once a month at Pandemonium and make some new friends who share your interest in reading. There's a conference room (cozy, artful, comfortable leather chairs) available for meeting in. The conference room is also used by the community for a plethora of functions ranging from photo classes to quilting clubs to church functions, baby showers and the list goes on. There is no charge for non-profit organizations and the fee otherwise is minimal.

Each weekend you can stop by the store and meet with an Alaskan author who will be conducting a book signing. They invite a diversified group of authors so you can be sure there will be an author there at some point in time with a book that interests you.

Children are welcome at Pandemonium and the owner's have gone so far as construct a puppet theatre for playtime. In addition, a children's reading hour is conducted once a week. Call the store to find out more about the days and times. Your child is welcome to sit in the children's section (they have special antique school desks and comfortable chairs and pillows as well) and read books while you browse through the store, or you may want to cuddle up with you child and read a book to them.

When people walk into Pandemonium, a smile crosses over their lips and it's as if they are thinking, "it feels like home, only cozier" Stop and see for yourself what the store has to offer. You can contact them at 907-3939 and their website is: info@akbookstore.com

Mat-Su Scholarship Winners

With rising energy costs Mat-Su College is doing all it can to save energy. The college has installed automatic paper towel dispensers in the bathrooms, which has cut paper usage in half. The college is also replacing computer monitors and servers with more efficient models. Finally, the college has upgraded interior lighting with more efficient T-8 florescent lights, and there are plans to shift from high pressure sodium lighting in the parking lots to much more efficient LED lighting.

Mat-Su Scholarship Winners

Interested in recycling on campus? Join the new recycling club. Contact Amy Seamans in Student Services for more information: 745-9799

Editor's Comments

By Kellie Coulson Davis

This is the paper that is to be put into a time capsule and not opened until 2058. In 2058, if I live that long, I will be 90 years old. Will I be invited and get to attend the reopening of this time capsule? Will medical technology cure the heart problems that have taken many of my family members around the age of 80, or will I be gone and my children be fondly reminiscing about my dreams of becoming a real writer that may or may not have happened?

This year, 2008, is a presidential election year. Six weeks ago, the Republican Presidential nominee chose Alaska's first female and youngest governor to be his running mate. She used to be the mayor of Wasilla, and she was also a PTA and hockey mom. Our legislature has been embroiled in scandal for the past 2 years with four of its members going to federal prison.

For the past month, our economy has been on a roller coaster and the federal government has pledged 700 billon dollars towards banks that were giving loans to people who could not hope to pay them back. The people who could not pay the loans back are called sub prime borrowers, meaning that they are not good candidates for a loan. These failed loans caused former triple A rated companies to loose most or all of their assets. Stocks that were worth a lot of money were suddenly worth nothing; companies would have a collection of loans and borrow against the loans. Every day the stocks shoot up or down. We treat them with kid gloves, wondering what will happen, but instead of consulting a numbers cruncher about where this mess will end, I think we should consult a psychologist because the stock market numbers are controlled by people.

Another question on the economy: , do we keep following the theory of trickle down economics and low taxes to promote job growth to grow our economy, or should the government step in and socialize and regulate daily business practices? In the words of Gordon Gecko, from the movie Wall Street, "greed is good"-- or does the government go in to stop the greed?

One of the major issues in the present election is energy production. Can we conserve our way out of our energy crises by using what we now call "alternative energy" sources like wind, water and solar power, or do we use energy production based on putting more carbon in the air? Do we keep driving hydrocarbon based vehicles or do we move to cleaner alternatives?

A lot of changes will happen in the next 50 years. During the last 12 years we saw the explosion of the internet. We went from a cash- based society to a credit based society. Fifty years ago, we saw the birth of nuclear power and a mass move to suburbia. We witnessed the birth of the Cold War and man had not yet been to the moon. In the next 50 years we expect to see increased space travel, science being able to cure more diseases and extend life. We may come up with a physics theory that unites all forces, and we may see more merging of biological life and machines.

In the end, the same issues will matter that have mattered to us for thousands of years: Who are we? Where are we going? Are we alone in the universe? What is the nature of good and evil?

Many public servants are clueless when it comes to helping people. certainly they knew rough times in college and maybe growing up, but once they are rolling with the big boys, they only pay lip service to helping the poor and the down and out. I do not ask that they adapt the ways of the down and out, but that they learn what is really happening and serve.

Foot Washing

By: Kellie Coulson Davis

When I was 22 and a single, divorced mother of two, my defense against the world was my set of fake, manicured nails with matching toe nail polish that my manicurist and best friend lovingly and religiously kept done for me. Oddly enough, I was also a social work major at UAA. I was obsessed with my hair and clothes, and I wanted to help people in the sense that I looked like I was being a nice person while looking stunning in the process and my ego was stoked by hearing how good I was.

To make up for some classes missed when one of my children got sick, a professor gave me the option of either going to serve at a luxury counseling center for something similar to AA or go down to serve dinner at the homeless shelter. I wanted to show her what I was made of and opted for the homeless shelter. What I considered "dressed for the occasion" still made me stick out like a sore thumb. My social interaction with the clients was less than stellar. While my friends had volunteered there with no problem, I was getting teased and called "Miss College Girl." I held my head up and served juice and tried to talk to people and acted like everything was fine, but I was in tears before the first hour was over while they asked me if I'd make them my next project.

When the manager had a spare moment, he called me into his office. He asked me what I was doing and I gushed about what I wanted to do as a social worker. I told him about classes to help people get jobs and how I would work with lawmakers to get funding. 18 years later, I think back on how I was and I don't know how he didn't blow the bad coffee he was drinking out of his nose while I bubbled with excitement for how I would save the world. He looked at me and said, "You have to do better than patent leather flats and last year's blue jeans." He said that it was one thing to want to help people but another to be willing to get dirt under my nails. If I wanted people to talk to me, I had to be willing to not act like I was a modern day saint who would go back to my castle as soon as my two hours were up. He told me to buy some second hand clothes at a thrift store (including tennis shoes) and remove my fake nails. He said that I needed to speak "like a regular person, and not use ten dollar words." He told me that my way of reaching out was insulting to the people I was helping, that I was only serving juice and that no one wanted my wisdom. He was not being mean to me; he was being brutally honest. He signed off the paper stating that I'd volunteered and said he knew I'd learned a lot. I left not in tears, but full of contemplation.

Time passed and the supervisor's jaw dropped when I showed up having removed my manicure and was wearing thrift store clothes. I got there by bus and had $4 on me. When I stood inline to get a free meal, no one remembered me. I started talking to a woman and people with what I perceived to have nothing were offering me advice on where to stay for the night, including a night in a make-shift tent and some home brew. I was a client at the shelter that night and I stayed up all night caring for a baby of a mother who was able to sleep on a cot and I'd be picked up by my mother the next morning with an amazing story to write for my professor.

18 years later, I am sickened by public servants who think that it's enough to sit on committee boards with other power players making decisions. I would so much like to see a public servant (judges, politicians, public prosecutors) actually care about the people they serve and minister in a capacity where they wash the feet of their poor, get dirt under their nails and serve incognito for a while, then "confide to a reporter" two years later and let the people see where they were actually serving. To serve the public is not about lox brunches and power lunches but about choking down a piece of humble pie and walking with the people who will be holding you up.

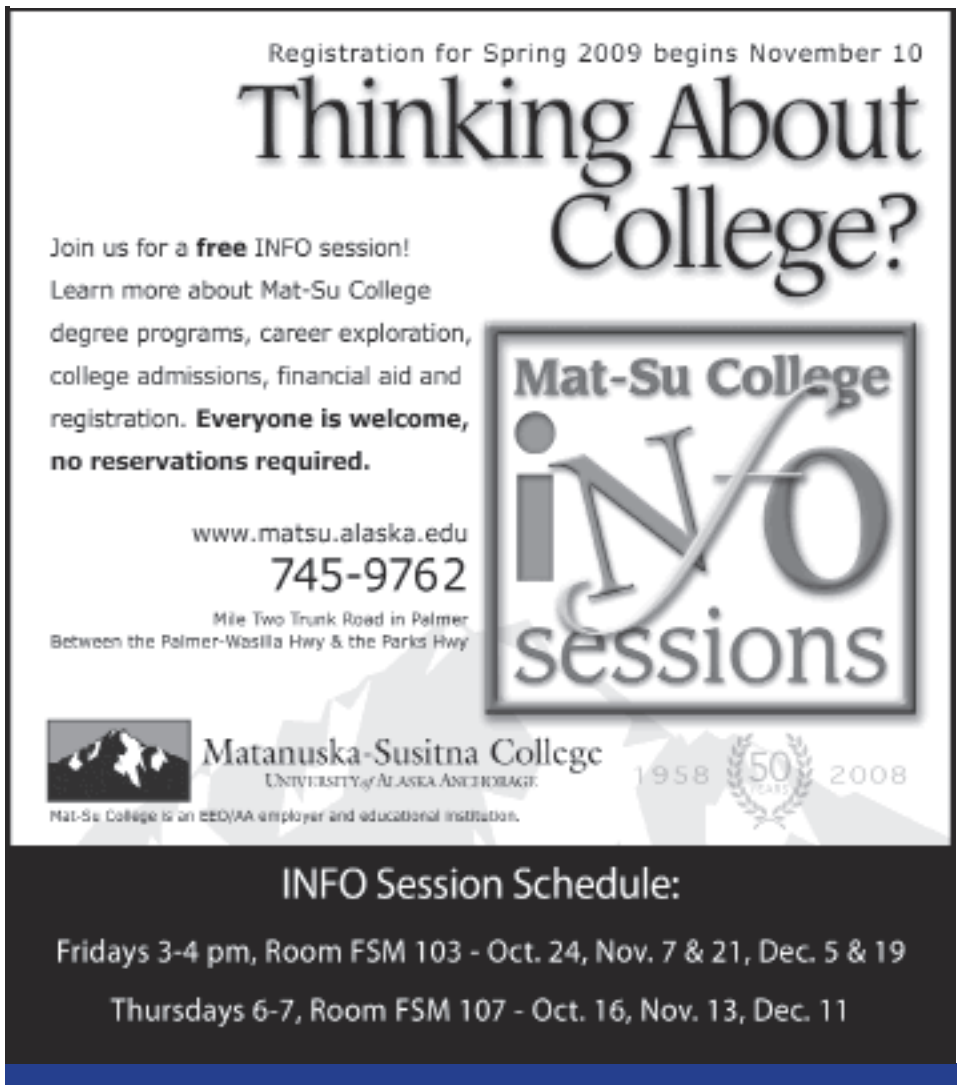
Mat- Su College Student Government

Meets every Tuesday, 11:50 - 12:50 pm in FSM 109

If you are interested in

- Volunteering
- Having fun
- Making Friends
- Representing the students of MSC
- Starting or joining a club
- Shaping our future

Or if you have comments, suggestions, or concerns, come join us or talk with one of the MSC Student Goverment members


Registration for Spring 2009 begins November 10
Thinking About College?
Join us for a free INFO session!
Learn more about Mat-Su College degree programs, career exploration, college admissions, financial aid and registration. Everyone is welcome, no reservations required.
www.matsu.alaska.edu
745-9762
Mile Two Trunk Road in Palmer
Between the Palmer-Wasilla Hwy & the Parks Hwy
Mat-Su College
iNFO
sessions
Matanuska-Susitna College
University of Alaska Anchorage
1958 50 2008
Mat-Su College is an EED/AA employer and educational institution.
INFO Session Schedule:
Fridays 3-4 pm, Room FSM 103 - Oct. 24, Nov. 7 & 21, Dec. 5 & 19
Thursdays 6-7, Room FSM 107 - Oct. 16, Nov. 13, Dec. 11

Screen Width solution

Here is a formula to fiqure out the screen width of a monitor based on the supported resolution and the diagonal size of the screen.

$$\text{WIDTH} = \frac{PW}{\frac{\sqrt{PH^2 + PW^2}}{\text{SCREEN SIZE}}}$$

PW reperesents the amount of pixels going across. PH reperesents the amount of pixels going down the screen.

Do you have a problem that needs solving, e-mail it to me at tenderholtjoshua@yahoo.com

Lions we ROAR!

Developing
CAMPUS
Lions Clubs

Come to our free pizza

Join us! FUN

Thursday
October 30
11:50-12:50
MCS Atrium

Activities

Join a Lions club and make a difference in your life and in the lives of countless others

For more information about Lions, contact:

Lion President Velez
About a Mat-Su College Lions Club
761-3750

We serve

Support

Membership criteria: Any person of legal majority and of good moral character and good reputation in his/her community may be granted membership in any duly authorized Lions club. Membership is by invitation only.

Lions Club International